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Senate approves tax incentives for land conservation

LANSING – The Michigan Senate Wednesday approved legislation to provide tax incentives for preserving land in conservation easements, said Sen. Michelle McManus, R-Lake Leelanau.

“This bill would allow people who wish to preserve their land and leave it to their heirs to do so without leaving them with an enormous property tax bill,” McManus said. “Encouraging more people to keep their land in a conservation easement will help preserve Michigan’s scenic open spaces, and that benefits our whole state.”

Senate Bill 1004 would amend the General Property Tax Act to say that a “conservational easement” does not constitute a transfer of property for tax purposes. This exception would not include any buildings or structures on the property, just the land itself. Buildings and structures would still be subject to the increase in taxes when a transfer of property occurs under Proposal A.

The bill now goes before the House of Representatives for consideration.

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